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Postoperative Instructions

TISSUE EXPANDER EXCHANGE FOR IMPLANT (SALINE OR SILICONE)

This is an outpatient surgery.

Have someone drive you home after surgery and help you at home for 1-2 days.

Get plenty of rest; follow balanced diet.

Decreased activity and pain medication may promote constipation, so you may want to add more fresh fruit to your diet, and be sure to increase fluid intake.

Take pain medication as prescribed. Do not take aspirin or any products containing aspirin unless approved by your surgeon.

Do not drink alcohol when taking pain medications.

If you are taking vitamins with iron, resume these as tolerated.

Do not smoke, as smoking delays healing and increases the risk of complications.

Bring a pillow to pad chest while wearing seatbelt.

Activities

Walk as soon as possible, this helps reduce swelling and lowers the chance of blood clots.

Do not drive until you are no longer taking any narcotic pain medications.

Do not drive until you have full range of motion with your arms.

Refrain from vigorous activity for 4 weeks.

You may start range of motion immediately but avoid excessive use of arms for 5-7 days.

Refrain from physical contact with breasts for 4 weeks.

Avoid body contact sports for 6-8 weeks.

Social and employment activities can be resumed in 3-10 days (depending on your occupation).

No swimming for 6 weeks.

Physical therapy is not typically necessary for this procedure.

Incision Care

Same incision will be used for exchange of breast tissue expander for implant.

Avoid exposing scars to sun for at least 12 months.

Always use a strong sunblock, if sun exposure is unavoidable (SPF 30 or greater).

Keep steri-strips in place.

Keep incisions clean, dry and inspect daily for signs of infection.

No tub soaking above waist while sutures are in place.

Wear your surgical bra 24/7 until your first postoperative visit. *(Dr. Wendel may let you change to a sports bra after the first visit. The sports bra needs to have a front closure with formed cups (not flat front).*

Avoid bras with stays or underwire bras for 6 weeks, unless Dr. Wendel

instructs you otherwise.

You may pad the incisions with dry gauze for comfort.

Refrain from sleeping on your stomach for 6 weeks.

What to Expect

Expect some drainage onto the steri-strips covering the incisions.

You are likely to feel tired for a few days, but you should be up and around in 3-5 days.

Maximum discomfort will occur in the first few days after surgery.

You may experience some numbness of nipples and operative areas.

You may experience a burning sensation in your nipples for several weeks.

You may experience temporary soreness, tightness, swelling and bruising as well as some discomfort in the incision area.

Your breasts may be sensitive to stimulation for several weeks.

Appearance

Most of the discoloration and swelling will subside in 4-6 weeks.

Scars will be reddened for 6 months. After that, they will gradually fade and soften.

Reconstructed breast may feel firmer and look rounder or flatter than natural breast.

Reconstructed breast may not match natural breast.

Follow-Up Care

Sutures are dissolvable. They are under your skin and released at the end of each incision. They are clear in appearance and will be trimmed to the skin line in 2-3 weeks.

After 3-6 months continue with routine mammograms at a radiology center where technicians are experienced in the techniques required with implants.

When to Call

If you have increased swelling or bruising.

If swelling and redness persist after a few days.

If you have increased redness along the incision.

If you have severe or increased pain not relieved by medication.

If you have any side effects to medications; such as, rash, nausea, headache, vomiting.

If you have an oral temperature over 100.4 degrees.

If you have any yellowish or greenish drainage from the incisions or notice a foul odor.

If you have bleeding from the incisions that is difficult to control with light pressure.

If you have loss of feeling or motion.

For Medical Questions, Please Call:

(615) 921-2100 Monday-Thursday 9:00 AM-5:00 PM and Fridays 8:00 AM – 12:00 PM. After hours and on weekends, the answering service will contact Dr. Wendel or the plastic surgeon on call.